

# carolina



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## **Stiles finds new life for ``Carolina''**

By Dana Harris

HOLLYWOOD (Variety) - Miramax Films is in final talks to become the U.S. distributor for the Julia Stiles romance "Carolina," with Marleen Gorris ("Antonia's Line") replacing Jon Amiel as helmer and Shirley MacLaine onboard to co-star. Budgeted at \$15 million, the film will begin production July 23 in Los Angeles.

The film was originally slated to be funded fully by indie producer IAC, with production set to begin this spring. But its financing was beset by complications that threatened to scuttle the project. IAC remains the film's co-financier and foreign sales agency.

The resuscitation of ``Carolina" was spearheaded by the passion of Stiles -- who wanted this film to follow her recent star turn in "Save The Last Dance" -- and her agency, UTA, which also reps Gorris.

In "Carolina," Stiles will play a young woman who leaves her wildly eccentric Southern family to relocate to the West Coast, where she must choose between two men who love her. Alessandro Nivola ("Jurassic Park III") also stars in the pic, penned by Katherine Fugate.

Laura Rister, Miramax's director of casting and creative affairs, brought the project into the company with Elizabeth Dreyer, Miramax's London-based VP of acquisitions. ICM reps MacLaine; Stiles is managed by Lighthouse Entertainment; Gorris by Seven Summits and Fugate by Hohman Maybank Lieb and AMG.

